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what we do on the immigration question, as the way we do it. Certainly to one who has gained an intimate glimpse of the Japanese, it would seem certain that, with

any ingenuity at all, we ought to be able to devise a formula that would meet the views of California and at the same time measurably satisfy the Japanese.

## The Anti-Japanese Agitation from a Business Man's Standpoint

By REGINALD H. PARSONS

Seattle, Washington

IN approaching the question of the desirability of retaining or rejecting Japanese immigration *in toto* or in part, much excitement and animus has been shown at points on the Pacific Coast, especially in California, against a people whose chief fault seems to lie in their intense energy and economic aggressiveness. It is true, however, that there is a grave problem relating to the social side of the situation.

The standard of living of the Japanese laborers is not the same as ours, and here is where there is natural and serious conflict. We are not accustomed to seeing women and children labor all day in the fields, and their apparent contentment under this situation with meager food and unattractive lodgings.

The American farmer becomes alarmed at the encroachments and the persistency of the Japanese. White labor objects seriously, or refuses entirely, to work side by side with a member of the yellow race, and so the employer finds he must choose one of two things: White labor—in many cases independent, undependable and inefficient, also, at times, scarce and difficult to obtain; or, he finds the Japanese, anxious and eager for work, performing his work with speed and efficiency, yet withal, mechanical in its proficiency and with a total lack of personal contact with the employer—an impersonal and selfish relationship invariably.

Much has been said to the effect that the Japanese are entirely undependable from the standpoint of honesty; that they will break contracts when it is to their interests to do so, and use pressure to enforce carrying out of such contracts by the other party when it is to the interest of the Japanese to have this done. Is he entirely unlike his white brethren in this respect? Are we in a position, at this point, to complain of and censure unduly laboring people who are guided much by the example set them in a foreign country? Can we expect others to maintain a standard of honesty to which we ourselves do not always hold?

Another class of Japanese immigrants is prominent in its service as hotel and house servants and chauffeurs. Here we have a more intelligent Japanese, who is, with rare exception, unusually efficient and reliable. With the exception of some trouble in Vancouver, B. C., many years ago, the Japanese have proved themselves at all times to be law-abiding, attending to their own business entirely, and in no way interfering with anybody's legal rights. In this respect, they are, of course, quite incomparable with many of the European immigrants employed in large numbers in various parts of the country, who have often proved themselves to be very recalcitrant and difficult to handle. One seldom if ever hears of a Japanese

strike or any acts of violence or depredation. They live peaceably among themselves, as well.

So much for a partial view of the inter-relation as between the two peoples on the Pacific Coast.

The violent agitation that has been in evidence for several years now in California has been due, therefore, to a fear of economic competition, but at points where the American laborer has, after all, a lesser contact, viz.: agricultural and horticultural, principally truck-gardening.

It has been proved that part, at least, of this agitation was fostered during the war by German money. How much of this influence still remains in the agitation it is impossible to say. No doubt many men are sincerely anxious and aroused over this situation.

Again, men of influence in the state of California no doubt have lent themselves, for political reasons, to this anti-Japanese agitation. In this, they are betraying the best interests of their state and their nation. California should realize that it has no race problem like the race problem confronting the South, and that the economic problem could quite easily be met by sane and proper legislation and effort and by the right kind of public spirit. Selfish men and those acting through ulterior motives should not be allowed to dominate the situation and so inflame the public mind that harm and injustice is thereby done to a peaceable part of the population. For one state of the Union to take upon itself a demand for a change in the Constitution of the United States—as California has done in the last election, by a certain majority unduly excited over the situation—seems a very grave error, and one which should not be countenanced by the rest of the nation. Too much is involved; the friendship of a friendly

nation, a large and growing commerce with an industrious people, where the opportunity for interchange of goods surpasses any other country excepting possibly Europe at this time, and where, by continuing our actions along these present unfriendly lines might very easily involve us in war. The statesmen of both countries have a very difficult matter to solve, and every help should be given them, through an impartial review of true facts and conditions, to handle the problem intelligently. Inflamed imaginations must not be allowed to dominate the situation.

We of the Pacific Northwest, under the circumstances, are naturally extremely anxious to see that fairness be displayed and justice properly meted out, and that every effort be put forth to counteract the evils that are now so assertive.

Just prior to the last election, it became quite evident that much of the saner element in California had seen the lack of wisdom in allowing themselves to be drawn into this maelstrom, and are making every effort to stem the tide of ill-feeling which has been rising so rapidly. We only hope that they will succeed in bringing clarity of vision into the situation, when justice and fairness will be shown, as is always the case with the American people in any state, when given the opportunity to think and act without prejudice.

On the other hand, the Japanese can hardly object to our taking any action against what they may feel is contrary to their interests, but which is similar to the way they treat foreigners themselves. They have always been a very exclusive people, and, as I understand, have many laws now which preclude the ownership of land by foreigners within their own confines, and, in other ways, fail to give foreigners the same standing in law which their own

countrymen enjoy. But this is a matter upon which our national government, and not any one state, should act.

While I do not wish to appear in any way officious, I feel that if the people of California would memorialize Congress or the State Department on the subject, giving them the true facts as they are, they should feel that their interests would be carefully studied and everything done to protect them legitimately and properly. It is the precipitate action of some people on the Pacific Coast which is so unwise, and should not be allowed, for the

reason that it might be serious in its consequences, involving the entire nation. May we, as an American people, never lower ourselves to commit unjust acts, through passion of the moment, which we may later sincerely regret! Our reputation as a fair people and our interests as a nation of business and industry demand that this problem be solved from a national standpoint, and from the interests of all concerned and the nation as a whole.

This is not a question of pro-Japanese or anti-Japanese, but of common sense and fair dealing.

## The Japanese Issue in California

By COL. JOHN P. IRISH<sup>1</sup>

Member of the State Development Board, Oakland, California

**R**ETROSPECTION will serve to illuminate current history. When the anti-Chinese agitation convulsed California a Congressional committee came here to investigate. In behalf of the municipality of San Francisco, this presentation of the case was made: "The Chinese are inferior to any race God ever made. They have got the perfection of the crimes of 4,000 years. The Chinese have no souls to save, and if they have they are not worth saving." The California Senate in its memorial to Congress said: "Impregnable to all the influences of Anglo-Saxon life they remain the same stolid Asiatics that have floated on the rivers and slaved

in the fields of China for thirty centuries of time." The Attorney-General of California testified: "The Chinese are inferior to the Negro and to the Indian."

The expulsion of the Chinese was demanded because of their vices. Following this we violated our treaty with China and expelled them by thousands. This created an economic vacuum that drew in the Japanese. Cultivated land amounting to 568,943 acres lapsed back to nature and ceased production for lack of farm labor. The Japanese came in slowly and abandoned fields were made productive by their labor. They proved to be cleanly, honest, law-abiding and very industrious. Not until after the Japanese-Russian war was there any criticism of them. Then the politicians and the press began an anti-Japanese agitation that has continued in intensity.

In contrast now with great abuse of the Japanese was constant expression

<sup>1</sup> President of Directory of the State Industrial Home for the Adult Blind for 30 years; Director for 35 years of the State Development Board, an organization devoted to the material development of the State; President of the California Delta Association, representing 250,000 acres of marsh land reclaimed by the skill and industry of the Japanese; practical farmer in California for 30 years.—The Editor.